



**GSEIS**

The Pacific Bell/UCLA Initiative  
for 21st Century Literacies at  
the UCLA Graduate School of  
Education & Information Studies

## *E-literate:* Promoting 21st Century Literacy Skills

### **Enhanced Literacy Skills Required for the 21st Century.**

Today most young people do not remember a time when there wasn't a World Wide Web. This is particularly true in the classroom and library where technology has transformed the opportunities for learning. Yet a computer and Internet connection are not enough. The resulting abundance of new, often unfiltered information requires enhanced literacy skills to find, evaluate, synthesize and use this information effectively as well as to create original content, usually in multiple formats.

### ***E-literate* Video Offers Help.**

On October 21, 2000, the Pacific Bell/UCLA Initiative hosted *New Technologies, New Literacies*, an educational summit that brought together 300 educators, librarians, and policy makers to address the meaning of literacy in the 21st century. The event premiered *E-literate*, a 15-minute educational video introducing 21st century literacies.

Working with UCLA faculty and staff, husband-wife team Thom Eberhardt and Christy Vasquez produced *E-literate*. Research revealed the existence of many excellent 21st century literacy materials and programs. Missing was a succinct message that would immediately draw attention to the issues. To fill this gap, the goal of the *E-literate* project was to create a short and compelling educational tool that could be easily integrated into existing programs and curricula across multiple environments, grade levels, and age groups.



**Literacies**

Pacific Bell/UCLA Initiative for 21st Century

## A Special Thanks to *E-literate's* Husband-Wife Producing Team, Thom Eberhardt & Christy Vasquez.

Pacific Bell/UCLA Initiative Co-directors, Aimée Dorr and Howard Besser, recognize *E-literate's* success would not have been possible without the combined experiences of Thom Eberhardt and Christy Vasquez. Thom is an award-winning writer/director with an impressive career in both educational and commercial film. He won two Emmys and a Peabody award for his educational work with PBS and the Agency for Instructional Television. Several of his more recent commercial films are aimed at teens. He won an Emmy award for the screenplay of *Ratz* (2000), a Showtime release that he subsequently published as young adult fiction under the title *Rat Boys: A Dating Experiment* (Hyperion 2001). Christy is a former librarian with a background in young adult literature and services to culturally diverse populations as well as information literacy instruction. This distinctive blend of expertise, coupled with their own role as parents of teenagers, left them perfectly suited to address information literacy through the medium of video. Thom and Christy generously donated their work at cost. The Pacific Bell/UCLA Initiative was fortunate and delighted to have their support and participation.

### Thom Eberhardt Selected Filmography:

Director, *I Was a Teenage Faust*, (2002)  
Writer and Director, *Ratz*, (2000)  
Director, *Twice Upon a Time*, (1998)  
Director and Screenwriter, *Captain Ron* (1992)  
Screenwriter, *Honey, I Blew Up the Kid* (1992)  
Director, *Gross Anatomy* (1989)  
Screenwriter, *Night of the Comet* (1984)

## More than 6500 *E-Literate* Videos Distributed in California and Beyond to Leaders and Professionals in K-12, Higher Education, and Public Library Settings!

Through generous support from SBC, the Pacific Bell/UCLA Initiative for 21st Century Literacies has distributed more than 6500 copies of *E-literate* since January 2001. Video dissemination was demand-driven, made available at no cost through online ordering, and at conferences and special programs. This approach resulted in a diverse profile of video recipients.<sup>1</sup>

Reflecting the Pacific Bell/UCLA Initiative's primary geographic target, the majority of videos were disseminated in the West and Northwest, with California receiving nearly 50% of the total distribution. However, *E-literate* was distributed nationwide, coupled by a broad reach across environments. More videos were sent to people in K-12 schools than any other setting, followed closely by people in colleges and universities.

## *E-literate's* Uses and Appeal Evaluated.

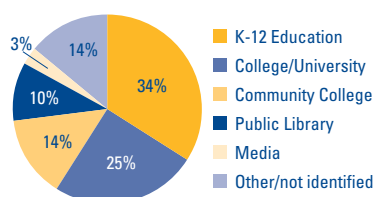
In March 2002 the Pacific Bell/UCLA Initiative issued a survey questionnaire to current video recipients (1279 ).<sup>2</sup> Twelve surveys were returned with an incorrect address. Of the 1267 surveys successfully mailed, a total of 290 (23%) valid responses were received. While a sample of nearly 300 respondents is large enough to provide a broad spectrum of opinions, it cannot be determined if these opinions are the same as those of people who did not respond. However, anecdotally every interaction with video recipients has been positive, leaving little doubt that the survey's positive findings would hold across most users.

The three-part survey included:

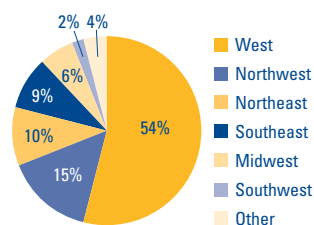
1. A close-ended matrix asking, "With whom and in what ways are you using the video?" Possible answers included 1) short-term class or workshop, 2) long-term curriculum or course integration, or 3) other uses. The matrix was followed by an open-ended comments section for which responses were coded into eight categories.<sup>3</sup>

## Dissemination is organizationally and geographically broad.

Organizational Environments Receiving *E-literate*



Regions in the U.S. Receiving *E-literate*



1 Based on video dissemination data as of July 11, 2002.

2 Often times a single video recipient received more than one copy. Therefore, while the total number of actual videos disseminated at the time of the survey mailing was 5347, the number of actual recipients was 1279.

3 Categories included: 1) good introduction, 2) addresses critical thinking, 3) general praise, 4) shared video with others, 5) received but have not used, 6) miscellaneous, 7) disliked video, 8) no comments.

2. Scaled data asking participants to rate the following two statements as Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, Don't Know: 1) *E-literate* contributes to my work; 2) I would recommend *E-literate* to others. An open-ended comments section was included for each statement and responses were coded into eight categories.<sup>3</sup>
3. Demographic data with close-ended questions addressing job title, type of organization or affiliation, sex, ethnicity, age, and geographic location.

In certain cases, bulk order requests for *E-literate* were accommodated to support substantive integration into existing programs and curricula. To capture information about the effectiveness of the video in these contexts, direct follow up was conducted with those people receiving 50 or more videos, asking how the video was used in their respective program, what was the response from their particular audience, and any opinions they had about the video based on their use and experience.

## Survey Respondents Predominantly White, Female Librarians in K-12 and Higher Education Settings.

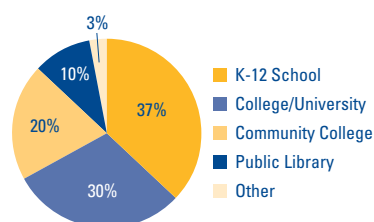
The majority of survey respondents identified their job title as Librarian (69%), followed by Director/Administrator (10%) and Teacher/Professor (8%). However, respondents were spread across several different environments with the greatest number coming from K-12 schools, including teachers and media specialists (33%). Colleges and universities (31%) and community colleges (20.7%) followed. This pattern reflects *E-literate's* general distribution. For example, 7% of respondents came from public libraries and public libraries received 10% of the total video distribution.

The other demographic characteristics are unsurprising given that the majority of survey respondents were librarians. For example, the majority of survey respondents identified themselves as White (86%) and female (78%). These percentages reflect the demographics of the profession, which on average is 88% White and 80% female across academic, public, and school library settings. (See Mary Jo Lynch, *Racial And Ethnic Diversity Among Librarians: A Status Report*, American Library Association, Office for Research and Statistics.) However, more than half of those respondents identifying themselves as other than White came from California, reflecting the state's growing diversity as well as the fact that the greatest number of total survey respondents (33%) were from California. In fact, the majority of respondents were from the West (36%) and Northwest (21%) followed by the Northeast (17%).

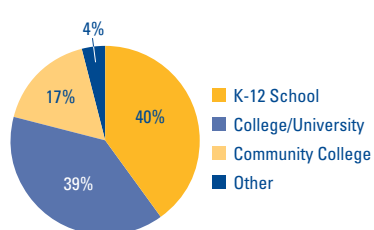
In addition, the majority of survey respondents reported to be between the ages of 35 and 59 years (75%), where 65% were aged 45 and older. These statistics reflect the fact that the library profession is aging more rapidly than the national trend. For example, in 1994 58% of librarians were aged 45 and older. (See Stanley Wilder, *The Age Demographics of Academic Librarians*, ARL Newsletter, April 1996, available on <http://www.arl.org/newsltr/185/agedemo.html>.)

**Distribution patterns similar across female and male respondents.** While the number of female respondents was significantly greater than the number of male respondents, when looked at separately the same patterns of distribution held for males and females across organization, job title, and geographic location.

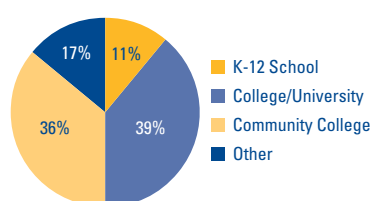
**Job Title: Librarian (n=201)**



**Job Title: Teacher/Professor (n=23)**



**Job Title: Director/Administrator (n=28)**

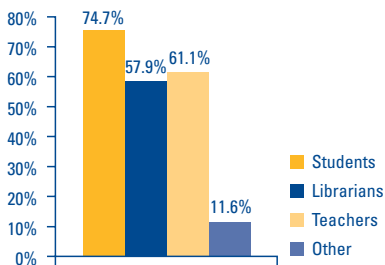


**Distribution patterns similar across job title and environment, yet public libraries missing.** It might be assumed, given that the majority of survey respondents identified their job title as that of librarian, that many respondents were working in public libraries. This is not the case (only 7% overall). In fact, most librarians reported their environment to be K-12 schools, colleges and universities, or community colleges. Those respondents reporting their job title to be director/administrator or teacher/professor had similar distribution patterns for the environments in which they worked. However, only librarians were found in public libraries and there were fewer directors and administrators in K-12 schools.

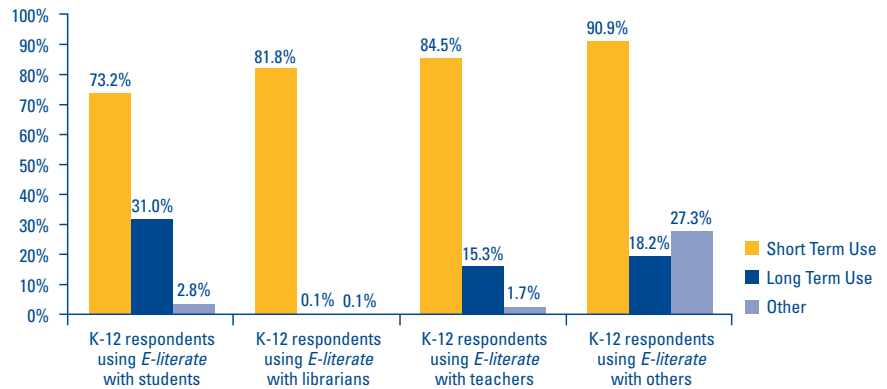
## Of the 290 survey respondents:

95 said they worked in a K-12 environment.

### Who they worked with:

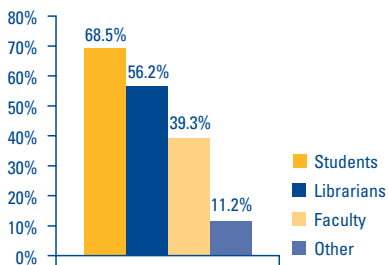


### What they did:

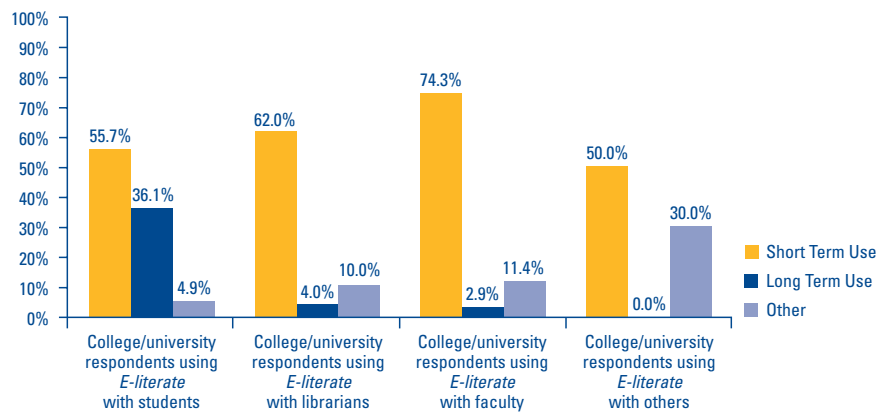


89 said they worked in a college/university setting.

### Who they worked with:

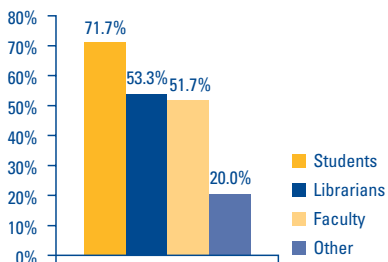


### What they did:

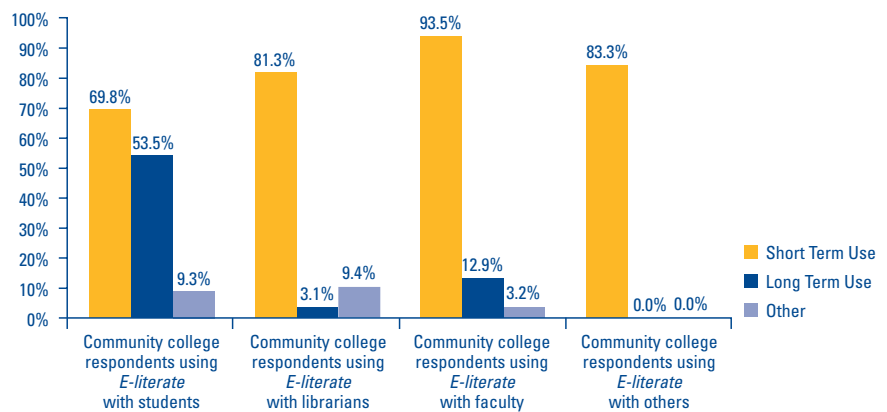


60 said they worked in a community college setting.

### Who they worked with:



### What they did:



## E-Literate Most Popular for Short-Term Uses; Long-Term Integration Important When Working with Students.

When asked, “With whom and in what ways are you using *E-literate*?” respondents indicated a wide-range of uses, audiences, and environments. In fact, individual respondents often indicated more than one audience or use, and in some cases, even more than one environment. As such, the total number of responses is greater than the total number of respondents for this data set.

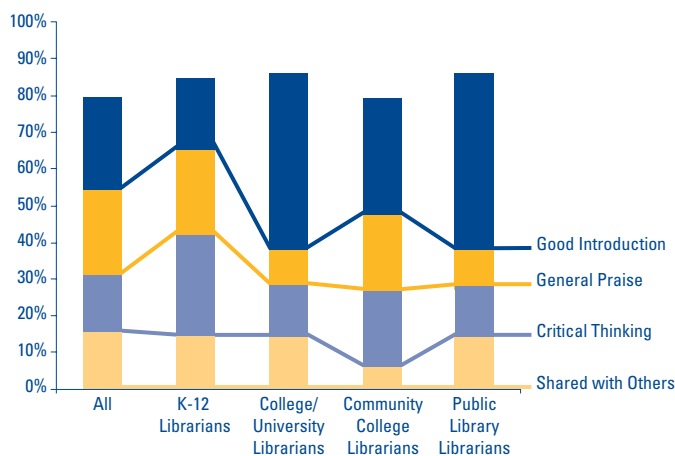
Students and librarians were particularly popular audiences. Short-term uses in a single class or workshop were also popular. However, long-term curriculum or course integration became significant for those working with students in K-12, college and university, and community college settings. These same patterns of use held when looking at that subset of respondents who identified their job title to be librarian, but this is not surprising since librarians made up the majority of the sample.

Only 20 of the 290 survey respondents said they worked in a public library. However, 19 of the 20 or nearly 100% indicated they used *E-literate* in short-term ways with other librarians, perhaps indicating *E-literate’s* usefulness as a professional development tool.

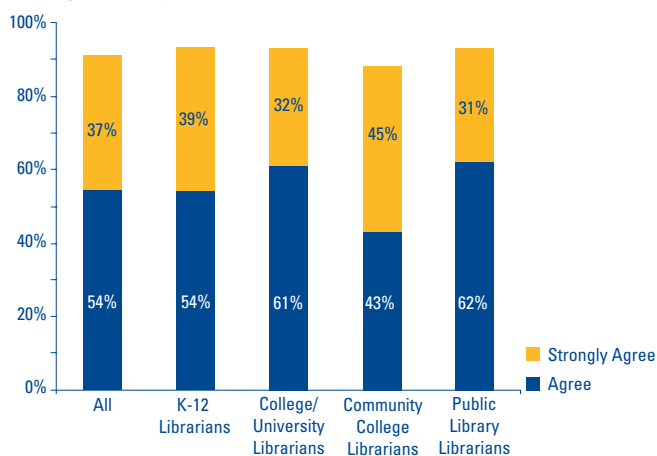
## E-literate Popular as an Introduction and in Supporting Critical Thinking.

Of the 290 surveys returned, 141 respondents offered comments. Just three were negative, stating the video was too short, lacked depth, or needed to be more adult for older students. Depending on the type of respondent, between seven and eleven percent of the comments indicated the video had been received but not yet used or reported other non-use comments. The majority of the comments, however, were positive, stating 1) *E-literate* provides an excellent introduction to the subject matter, 2) general praise such as *interesting, excellent, very useful*, 3) *E-literate* supports critical thinking and evaluation skills, and 4) that they had shared the video with others. However, librarians working in higher education and public libraries ranked “good introduction” higher than

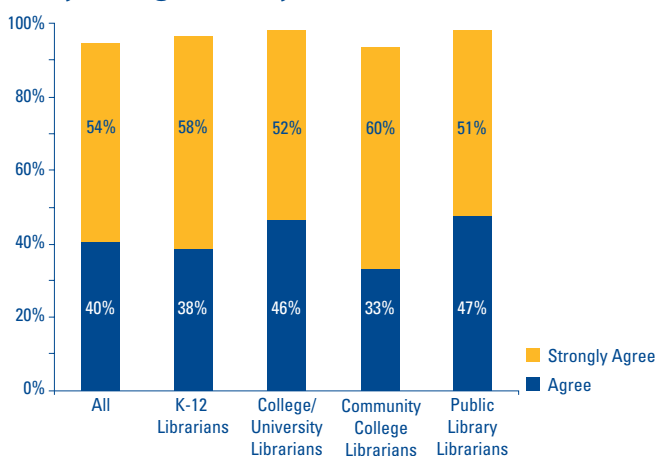
librarians in other environments. In contrast, librarians working in K-12 schools were less focused on using *E-literate* as an introductory tool and instead noted “critical thinking” as their number one comment, perhaps reflecting curricular demands and focus.



## Everyone Agrees E-literate Contributes to Their Work!



## Everyone Agrees They Would Recommend E-literate to Others!



## Selected Survey Comments.

*This video has been a **wonderful** introduction to information literacy for our campus. It takes the concept beyond the library and helps faculty see how it applies directly to their classroom.*

(Community college librarian, Louisiana)

*We use this video in all freshman English Composition classes visiting the library. All of the professors involved are impressed. It touches issues important to them as they teach critical evaluation of resources.*

(College librarian, Pennsylvania)

*An excellent video—a real eye-opener for people who think everything's on the Net. Delivers an important message.*

(K-12 Library media specialist, California)

*Terrific video! I mostly teach Information Literacy to Gen Y students. They respond really well to the pace, the music, the video clips—and most importantly—to the content. I show the video as a precursor to a discussion about information overload and evaluating sources.*

(College librarian, Massachusetts)

*Since so many young people are in the video, my students listen.*

(K-12 Library media specialist, New York)

## Interviews Reveal Success with Substantive Integration.

### *E-literate* Serves the California State University System—Both Faculty and Students.

The California State University (CSU) system is composed of 23 campuses serving a diverse student population. Copies of *E-literate* were sent to every campus library director, every campus faculty development director, and everyone who had received funding from the CSU Chancellor's Office to develop an information literacy project.

Lorie Roth, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs, CSU Chancellor's Office, explained "From the first day I saw it . . . I knew the video was great stuff, and that's why I was eager to get it widely distributed in the CSU system." The feedback has been wonderful. Ms. Roth reported that *E-literate* is especially persuasive in converting the uninitiated. It speaks to faculty and administrators who have no previous awareness that the term "information literacy" even exists but who, immediately upon seeing the video, recognize the issues being communicated in such a vivid and compelling fashion. In short, for faculty and administrators, the video seems to raise consciousness about—and gives a name to—something that people had vaguely intuited but never articulated in a concrete, specific way.

Ms. Roth noted the genius of the video is that it is tremendously appealing to a wide range of people very different in age, in educational level, and in interest in the topic. Whereas a number of people in the CSU system have used the video to raise awareness among faculty and administrators, others also use it as the first segment of the bibliographical instruction workshops that many CSU campuses require of freshmen.

### *E-literate* Included in the Washington State Library Information Literacy Project.

The *Information Literacy Project* (ILP) is a three-year Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA)-funded project whose goals are to increase the public's ability to solve information problems and to evaluate information for its legitimacy and accuracy. Through a massive statewide publicity campaign, the ILP is increasing citizen awareness of the importance of information literacy, and of the vital role libraries and librarians can play as agents to facilitate information literacy.

Starting in September 2001, ILP began offering workshops for staff from all types of libraries who are involved with patron information needs. These half-day training workshops introduce participants to the principles and practices of information literacy. To date, more than 500 library staff members have participated statewide who then reach thousands of patrons. Using the *E-literate* video in the workshop's introductory unit, trainers guide participants toward examining why information literacy skills are important to their users in the modern information environment. Rhona Klein, Director of the *Information Literacy Project*, reports the video's entertaining yet informative approach provides workshop participants with an engaging "hook" into the issues surrounding information literacy.

Workshop attendees have been thoroughly positive in their responses to the video. Many inquired about how to order their own copies; several said they were eager to show it to colleagues, faculty, parents, and their own children and students. Some staff members were interested in a Spanish language version. As one trainer said, "The video was a hit!"

## Bowling Green State University Uses *E-literate* to Reach Faculty, Librarians and Students.

Since early 2001, Bowling Green State University's *Teaching, Learning, and Technology Program* has distributed 150 *E-literate* videos to faculty members attending faculty development information literacy workshops. In addition, *E-literate* was included in outreach workshops presented to Ohio academic and K-16 librarians.

*E-literate* is used as an icebreaker at the beginning of workshops or after a workshop introduction to give participants an overview of the current information environment. Catherine A. Cardwell, Assistant Professor, Library User Education Coordinator, Jerome Library, Bowling Green State University, reported the video never fails to get a laugh. At the same time, the real-world example addressing the misrepresentation of a Martin Luther King Web site by a White Supremacist group never fails to shock participants and make them realize how easy it is to fabricate an official looking site. Several faculty members who saw the video are using it in their classes.

The *Teaching, Learning, and Technology Program* benefited from having such a professional video to rely on. Ms. Cardwell noted it encourages people to realize the seriousness and scope of information literacy in a succinct, visually appealing format.

## UCLA's University Elementary School Includes *E-literate* in Teacher Professional Development.

For the last three years, the Pacific Bell/UCLA Initiative has provided support to the *Creating a Thinking Curriculum Institute*, a 10-day professional development institute for classroom teachers designed to help them meet the needs of 21st century learners. This institute was developed by Corinne A. Seeds University Elementary School (UES). Each year UES works with a cohort of 30 Los Angeles Unified School District teachers to train them how to weave together inquiry-based learning, technology, and information literacy to create a tapestry of 21st century learning. The Initiative has supplied the *E-literate* video to participating teachers as one tool they can use to introduce the topic of 21st century literacies to students, school administrators, and parents.

## *E-literate* a Tremendous Success and Now Available On-line.

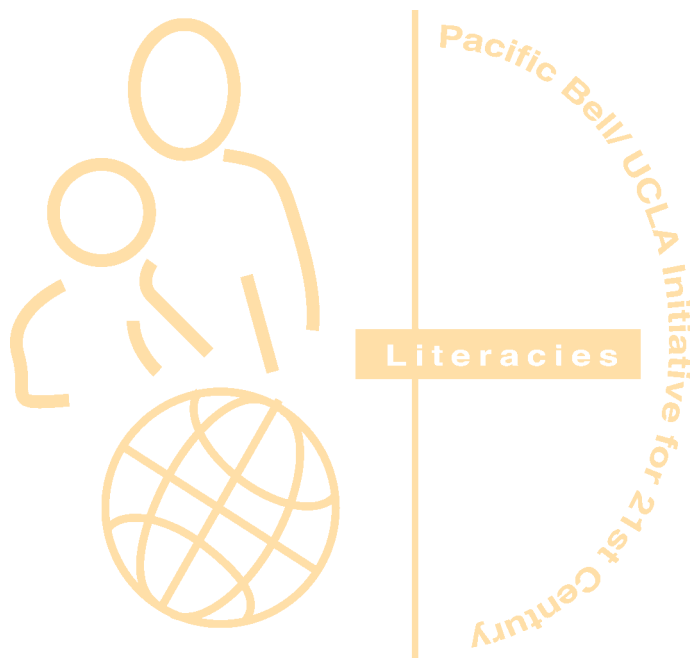
*We have included the video in the Navy Librarians Information Literacy Toolkit. It's on over 3000 CD ROM's which are in Navy Libraries and onboard ships. We don't know how many times it has been shown, but it could be in the thousands.*

(Navy Librarian, California)

*E-literate* has achieved greater popularity than was ever imagined during its production! The video's ability to address facts versus opinions, bias, and information reliability in a humorous yet provocative tone has captured the attention of children, teens, college students, and adults. In fact, a request was received by the Department of the Navy Chief Information Officer's Office (DON CIO) to include *E-literate* in its *Information Literacy Toolkit*. The *Toolkit* is already supporting Navy personnel and will soon be available free of charge to the public in CD-ROM format and streamed on the DON CIO publicly accessible Web site (<http://www.don-imit.navy.mil/default.asp>). The Navy is preparing a synchronized transcript that will accompany *E-literate* to enable people with disabilities to hear as well as read each scene as it is played.

*E-literate* has far exceeded our goal to offer an educational tool that easily integrates across multiple settings, grade levels, and age groups, and we hope it has contributed to raising awareness around critical literacy issues in the 21st century.

After distributing more than 6500 copies of *E-literate* to schools, libraries, colleges, and community centers around the country, the supply is exhausted. However, a streamed version may be accessed on [www.newliteracies.gseis.ucla.edu](http://www.newliteracies.gseis.ucla.edu). To request permission to make a copy for educational use, please contact the Pacific Bell/UCLA Initiative for 21st Century Literacies.



## The Pacific Bell/UCLA Initiative for 21st Century Literacies

In Spring 2000 SBC Pacific Bell awarded UCLA's Graduate School of Education and Information Studies a \$1 million gift to form the Pacific Bell/UCLA Initiative for 21st Century Literacies. This private-public partnership supports projects exploring the meaning of literacy in an age of rapidly changing technologies and growing diversity through three interrelated areas:

- *Strong User Skills*: Enhancing the abilities of young people, teachers, librarians, and all citizens through the integration of information, media, multicultural, visual, and other 21st century literacy skills;
- *Good Web Design*: Improving access and use through system design that matches the literacy levels, technological capabilities, and other characteristics of the user.
- *Effective Public Policy*: Defining the digital divide's multiple dimensions and indicators for measuring success.

## Resources to Complement the Use of *E-literacy*

The following resources are available through the Pacific Bell/UCLA Initiative for 21st Century Literacies Web site, [www.newliteracies.gseis.ucla.edu](http://www.newliteracies.gseis.ucla.edu):

### *Literacies at the End of the 21st Century.*

Authored by Initiative co-director Aimée Dorr with commentary from faculty in UCLA's Graduate School of Education & Information Studies, this eight-page summary provides excellent background on the evolution of literacy and technology over time.

### *SBC Knowledge Network Explorer 21st Century Literacies Web site*

(<http://www.kn.sbc.com/wired/21stcent/>).

A unique site offering a conceptual orientation to 21st century literacies; links to information, media, multicultural, and visual literacy resources; and more than 30 web-accessible K-12 lesson plans.

### *21st Century Literacies: Training of Public Library Trainers Manual.*

Developed under the direction of Virginia Walter, Chair, UCLA Department of Information Studies, and Cindy Mediavilla, Ph.D., special projects coordinator, UCLA Department of Information Studies, this manual is based on the content of two workshops delivered in spring 2002 to public librarians in Northern and Southern California.

### *21st Century Literacies Bibliography.*

A ProCite database with more than 3000 citations in information, media, visual, cultural, and other 21st century literacies.



For more about the information included in this survey report, please contact the Pacific Bell/UCLA Initiative.

**The Pacific Bell/UCLA Initiative for 21st Century Literacies**  
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This 2003 report was written by Sheila Afnan-Manns, Coordinator, Pacific Bell/UCLA Initiative for 21st Century Literacies and graduate student, UCLA Department of Information Studies and Aimée Dorr, Dean and Professor, UCLA Graduate School of Education & Information Studies. Special thanks to Alma Ortega, former student, UCLA Department of Information Studies, for her support in developing and mailing the survey and conducting preliminary data analysis using SPSS software.